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EXAMINER

CORRIELUS, JEAN M

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2172

DATE MAILED: 10/09/2003

8

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/826,121

Applicant(s)

LEE ET AL.

Examiner

Jean M Corrielus

Art Unit

2172

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 23 July 2003.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-42 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 23 July 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
- Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☐ The proposed drawing correction filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is: a) ☐ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner.
- If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- \* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
- a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

## Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) \_\_\_\_\_
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). \_\_\_\_\_
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other:

Art Unit: 2172:

## **DETAILED ACTION**

1. This office action is in response to the amendment filed on July 23, 2003, in which claims 1-42 are pending for further examination.

### ***Response to Arguments***

2. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 1-42 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection necessitated by amendment.

### ***Drawings***

3. Applicants are required to furnish the formal drawings in response this office action. No new matter may be introduced in the required drawing. Failure to timely submit a drawing will result in ABANDONMENT of the application.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112***

4. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

5. Claims 1, 15 and 29 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Claims 1, 15 and 29 provide the use of using a multi-functional customer relationship management tool. However, the body of the claims does not provide the using a multi-functional

Art Unit: 2172:

customer relationship management tool. The body of the claims does perform what the preamble set forth. Applicants are advised to amend the claims to solve the 112 problem set forth in the rejection.

6. Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as containing subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. Claim 1 line 8 recites "allow a client representative to track customer contacts with the customer". It is not clear as to how one having ordinary skill in the would be able to track customer contacts with *a customer*". Applicants are advised to amend the claims to solve the 112 problem set forth in the rejection.

***Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103***

7. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made

Art Unit: 2172:

in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

8. Claims 1-42 as best understood by the examiner are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Siegel et al (hereinafter "Siegel") US Patent Application Publication no. 200/0077923 in view of Thomson et al., (hereinafter "Thomson") US Patent Application Publication no. 2003/0061104.

As to claim 1, Siegel discloses the claimed "generating a customer database including customer records, wherein each customer record tracks a customer" by creating customer database registration form which allows customer to register his or her entry such as name, physical, E-mail, phone number, the purchased product, the retailer from whom the product was purchased in order to allow the merchant to properly track the customer ([0031], and [0032]); "generating a product database including product records, wherein each product record tracks a customer" a product database which includes product information [0034]; "creating a plurality of modules which allow specific access and manipulation of the customer and product database to allow a client representative to track customer contact with the customer, product information and servicing information" ([0039]-[0040]); "updating the customer database from information received from the customer to add or modify a specific product purchase information about the customer using one of the plurality of modules" ([0033]-[0035]). Siegel does not explicitly disclose the use of "updating the product database from information received from the product to add or modify a specific product and inventory information

Art Unit: 2172:

about the product using one of plurality of modules”; and “providing product and customer record information in the database to a requesting client representative using one of plurality of modules”. However, Siegel discloses the use of properly tracking consumer’s interest and purchases, wherein based on the information provided by the consumer on the registration form, central processor searches product database and determines if the any upgrades or product enhancements are available, if so sent a notification to the consumer to determine whether the consumer is interested in them; if indeed the consumer is interested in the upgrade or product enhancement ([0033]-[0035]).

On the other hand, Thomson discloses an analogous system for providing warranty support to purchasers utilizing an integrated system. In particular, Thomson discloses the use of at least a first database accessible via a network computer by a plurality of customers, wherein at least one database includes a personalized portion for each one of the plurality of customers ([0000]); at least a second database accessible to a plurality of manufacturers regarding product sold by the manufacturers ([000]). Thomson discloses the claimed “creating a plurality of modules which allow specific access and manipulation of the customer and product database to allow a client representative to track customer contact with the customer, product information and servicing information” as a warranty administrator interfaces with and supports both the customers and the manufacturers ([0020]); “updating the product database from information received from the product to add or modify a specific product and inventory information about the product using one of plurality of modules” ([0064]-[0095]); and “providing product and customer record information in the database to a requesting client representative using one of plurality of modules” ([0023]-[0028]). Therefore, it

Art Unit: 2172:

would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel's system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

As to claim 2, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed "a repair facility representative, a call center representative, and a ware house representative and wherein the plurality of modules are at least two members of a set of modules comprising a customer interaction module, a return merchandise management module, a warranty administration module, an e-mail module, an inventory management module, a reporting system module and a credit card processing module" ([00020]-[0022]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel's system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

Art Unit: 2172:

As to claim 3, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed “transmitting over the network an input page in which the client representative enters data to update the customer database” ([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel’s system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

As to claim 4, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed “transmitting over the network an input page in which the client representative enters search information to request customer record formation from the customer database”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]); “receiving the input page transmitted by the client representative including a request for customer record information”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]); “generating an information page including customer record information for the customer record specified in the received input page”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]); and “transmitting the information page to



Art Unit: 2172:

the requesting client representative over the network”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[0102]; [0121]-[0122]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel’s system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

As to claim 5, Siegel discloses the claimed “transmitting over the network an input page in which the client representative enters data to update the product database” ([0006]).

As to claim 6, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed “transmitting over the network an input page in which the client representative enters search information to request product record formation from the product database”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[0102]; [0121]-[0122]); “receiving the input page transmitted by the client representative including a request for product record information”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[0102]; [0121]-[0122]); “generating an information page including product record information for the product record specified in the received input page”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-

Art Unit: 2172:

[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]; and “transmitting the information page to the requesting client representative over the network”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]).

As to claim 7, Thomson discloses the claimed “tracking information about each contact with the customer” tracking consumer’s interest and purchases, wherein based on the information provided by the consumer on the registration form, central processor searches product database and determines if the any upgrades or product enhancements are available, if so sent a notification to the consumer to determine whether the consumer is interested in them; if indeed the consumer is interested in the upgrade or product enhancement ([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]); “providing problem and solution codes to be selected by the client representative”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]); and “recording and additions or modifications in either the customer or product record wherein the client representative has access to all customer contact information including prior purchase and prior contacts with the customer”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]).

Art Unit: 2172:

As to claim 8, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed “wherein the contact with the customers is by e-mail and e-mail and an E-mail module is used to respond back to the customer, wherein the E-mail module scans the E-mail for key words and categorizes the E-mail for appropriate response using predetermined problem and solution codes and E-mail templates are used to form a response back to the customer”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel’s system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

As to claim 9, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed “interlinking with a front end GUI to display the product image and information over the Internet” [0278]. Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel’s system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home

Art Unit: 2172:

page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

As to claim 10, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the recited feature “sending a notification when the number of products reaches a preset number stored in the product record”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]); “recording order information for the order of additional products from a supplier”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122]]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel’s system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

Art Unit: 2172:

As to claim 11, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed “accessing a return merchandise management module”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[0102]; [0121]-[0122]); producing a printable sheet with a bar code identifying a returned product using a commercial bar code font to code the bar code”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[0102]; [0121]-[0122]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel’s system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

As to claim 12, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed “producing a printable sheet with information on the purchase of the product”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[0102]; [0121]-[0122]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel’s system the enhanced capability of maintaining

Art Unit: 2172:

warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

As to claim 13, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed “producing a report based on information from the customer and product records”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122])).Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel’s system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

As to claim 14, Siegel and Thomson disclose substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses the claimed “interlinking a third party shipping software with the product database”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[[0102]; [0121]-[0122])); “updating the product database from information receiving from the third party shipping software to add or modify a specific product record indicating shipping information about the

Art Unit: 2172:

product”([0020]-[0022]; [0027]-[0028]; [0053]-[0059]; [0072]-[0088]; [0098]-[0102]; [0121]-[0122]). Therefore, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art of data processing, at the time the present invention was made to combine the teachings of the cited references. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel’s system the enhanced capability of maintaining warranty records with all warranty records displayed on a personalized home page, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

Claims 15-28 are for system performing the method claims 1-14. They are, therefore, rejected under the same rationale.

Claims 29-42 are computer program product containing instructions performed by the method claims 1-14. They are, therefore, rejected under the same rationale.

***Remark***

(A). Applicants asserted that Siegel and Perkowski do not disclose the use of “creating a plurality of modules which allow specific access and manipulation of the customer and product database to allow a client representative to track customer contact with the customer, product information and servicing information”. The examiner disagrees with the precedent assertion. Applicants are

Art Unit: 2172:

interpreting the claims very narrow using the specification without considering the broad teaching of the reference stated in the rejection. However, when read and analyzed in light of the specification, the invention as claimed does not support applicant, arguments, and clearly read on the cited reference. The claims do not capture the essence of the invention as argued in applicant's remarks pages 13 and 14. Siegel, however, discloses a system for offering to sell the customer additional products during a registration process. The system of Siegel, wherein merchant web server provides a web site having various functionality which allows customer to electronically register products they have purchased. Such a merchant web server may be affiliated with many businesses which allows customers to obtain product information and purchase product ([0021]). Siegel discloses the use of "creating a plurality of modules which allow specific access and manipulation of the customer and product database to allow a client representative to track customer contact with the customer, product information and servicing information" as network interface to communicate with customer through their respective interface by creating a database entry corresponding to the customer and stores the customer ID and the information provided by the customer, wherein such database entry allow merchant to properly track the customer's interest and purchase ([0031]-[0035]). Perkowski, on the other, discloses a system for providing product information to consumer over the Internet. Siegel and Perkowski discloses substantially the invention as claimed. In addition, Thomson discloses an Internet based product information database that includes a category of arrangement and display such according to specific type of product information. Applicants duly note that one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the was made would have found it obvious to combine the teachings of the



Art Unit: 2172:

cited references, Siegel and Perkowski, Both are directed to the same field of endeavor. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the invention would have been motivated to do such a combination because that would provide Siegel's system the enhanced capability of collecting, managing and delivering product related information to the customers along with the product information, thereby maintaining a supply of products in inventory database sufficient to meet the demand for such products.

(B). Applicants asserted that neither Siegel nor Perkowski discloses the recited "the plurality of modules are at least two members of a set of modules comprising a customer interaction module, a return merchandise MANAGEMENT MODULE, A WARRANTY ADMINISTRATION MODULE, AN E-MAIL MODULE, AN INVENTORY MANAGEMENT MODULE, A REPORTING SYSTEM MODULE AND A CREDIT CARD PROCESSING MODULE. Perkowski discloses such aforementioned assertion as an Internet based product information database management subsystem that provides a manufacturer-defined consumer-product directory that can be used by various persons along the retail chain, wherein the Internet based product information database are categorically arranged and displayed according to specific types of product information such product warranty and servicing, the product price at which the products are being offered for sale.

Art Unit: 2172:

***Conclusion***

9. Applicant's amendment necessitated the new ground(s) of rejection presented in this Office action. Accordingly, **THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL**. See MPEP § 706.07(a). Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the date of this final action.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or early communication from the Examiner should be directed to **Jean M. Corrielus** whose telephone number is (703) 306-3035. The Examiner can normally be reached on Tuesday-Friday from 7:00am to 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Kim Vu, can be reached on Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m. at (703)305-4393.

**Any response to this action should be mailed to:** Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks  
Washington, D.C. 20231

**or faxed to:** (703) 308-9051, (for formal communications intended for entry)

**Or:** (703)305-9731 (for informal or draft communications, please label "PROPOSED" or


Serial Number: 09/826,121:

Page 18

Art Unit: 2172:

"DRAFT") Hand-delivered responses should be brought to Crystal Park II, 2021 Crystal Drive, Arlington. VA., Sixth Floor (Receptionist).

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application should be directed to the group receptionist whose telephone number is (703) 305-9600.



Jean M. Corrielus

Patent Examiner

September 30, 2003